women's goals, challenges, and the political context they face. Although not all of her hypotheses are supported in all cases, partisan divisiveness, gender consciousness, staffing resources, and the type of caucus appear as consistent themes.

The results of the four case studies reveal a significant partisan divide, making bipartisan efforts challenging and policy caucuses less likely. Mahoney also shows that GOP women are less likely to have gender consciousness, which would facilitate a willingness to cooperate along gendered lines, leading to both structural and policy implications. She notes rather pointedly that "scholars and pundits alike often cite women as an exception to the partisan rule ... but sweeping generalizations about women's political noblesse ... would be misplaced within institutions traditionally organized around political parties" (p. 2). Although women may be more likely to engage in bipartisan collaboration, it is indeed problematic to hold women to higher standards and forgo partisan differences. Women may share gendered experiences, but their intersectionality must be recognized.

The implications of polarization for women's ability to organize is significant and may have an endogenous effect, further limiting bipartisan action. If any generalization is to be drawn, it is that in a polarized climate, where GOP women are less readily gender conscious, social caucuses are more likely to form and succeed than policy caucuses.

Mahoney's work is exemplary in providing rich descriptions of caucus attempts, in part by extending our definition of caucuses as any collective action attempt; however, it struggles in distinguishing between caucus formation and failure. Are the same factors at play for establishing a working group as the ones that are responsible for the failure of a preexisting group? Future work should seek to explore this question further to understand how the factors affect the full process of legislative collective action. I expect future quantitative efforts to make use of Mahoney's theory-building work to test for comparative effects of various factors to make broader generalizations.

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Starving the Beast: Ronald Reagan and the Tax Cut Revolution by Monica Prasad. New York, Russell Sage Foundation Press, 2018. 256 pp. Paper, $35.00.

Why has the Republican Party centered its domestic agenda around tax cuts for three decades? Monica Prasad presents a thorough, complicated, and convincing story of the political motivations and impact of Ronald Reagan's

Economic Recovery Tax Act (ERTA) of 1981. *Starving the Beast* argues that the ERTA marked the transformation of the Republican Party from a party of fiscal responsibility to one of tax cuts. Reagan showed his fellow Republicans that running on tax cuts was not only electorally popular but came with no economic or political costs. Republicans could now distribute government benefits through the tax code as a counter to Democratic expansions of the welfare state. This strategy united disparate factions within the party and is still one of the GOP's only popular policy positions.

Prasad argues that the political and economic environment of the late 1970s provides the context for the success of the ERTA. The Republican Party's reputation was in ruins after Watergate, and party elites were desperate for a winning electoral message that could challenge Democratic congressional control. A period of high inflation resulted in bracket creep, moving households into higher tax ranges and eroding consumer purchasing power. Reagan's response to voter concerns about the economy was the ERTA, which focused on cutting individual marginal rates for three consecutive years. President Reagan championed the ERTA as a rationale for the economic recovery leading up to the 1984 election, while Democrat Walter Mondale promised to raise taxes. Reagan won in a landslide and, although not causal, the link was established between promising lower taxes and Republican electoral success. Every Republican presidential nominee since has made tax cuts a central part of their campaign platform.

The most effective part of Prasad's argument is evaluating and dismissing popular theories for why Reagan adopted the ERTA despite public concern about how tax cuts would worsen the deficit. First, public opinion polls at the time did not show consistent and overwhelming support for tax cuts. Reagan had to continually link the tax cuts to addressing government waste and fraud as well as a solution to a sluggish economy. Second, Reagan and his advisers were suspicious of the supply-side arguments for tax cuts and did not fully embrace the idea that rate reductions would lower the deficit either in private or on the stump. Third, not only did the business community not instigate the individual tax cuts, major business interests had to be sold on the ERTA. Businesses were worried that a large tax cut for individuals would result in a host of negative economic outcomes and were more concerned about the accelerated costs recovery system. Fourth, there is little evidence that the ERTA was part of a "starve the beast" strategy of purposely running deficits so as to shrink the welfare state. Reagan ended up increasing taxes twice due to deficit concerns in his first term. Prasad also finds weak evidence for the argument that Reagan's tax cuts were a dog whistle to racially resentful voters that government support was ending for racial and ethnic minorities. The most important insight here is that

previous accounts of Republican tax cutting overstated the influence of business interests and the wealthy.

Prasad examines tax policy through a comparative lens, noting that the U.S. consumer economy produced higher levels of overall taxation and regulation than in Europe. The European bargain allowed for a generous welfare state in exchange for low taxation and regulation of capital. The U.S. tax system's reliance on capital, income, and profit taxes resulted in higher inflation, pushing up tax levels and placing tax policy on the national agenda. It is not clear how these international comparisons affected Republicans' political calculations.

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Changing Cultures in Congress: From Fair Play to Power Plays by Donald R. Wolfensberger. New York, Columbia University Press, 2018. 200 pp. Paper, $35.00.

In 2017, then Speaker of the House Paul Ryan broke the record for most closed rules in a single session. Ironically, this feat came only two years after vowing to lead the House in a more open and inclusive manner than his recent predecessors had. This about-face was not new or unique to Ryan, though. Indeed, he was simply the next in a string of Speakers over the previous few decades to promise greater debate, only to renege shortly thereafter.

Chronicling this decline of deliberation in Congress is the focus of Donald R. Wolfensberger's work. The former Republican staff director for the House Rules Committee offers a detailed yet accessible insight into how Congress has evolved in recent history. Beginning with a brief discussion of the history of majoritarian politics in Congress, Wolfensberger specifically looks at a litany of case studies from the last two decades. Topics cover a wide range, including health care reform, budgets and deficits, and the Iran nuclear deal, to name a few. Within each, a common theme pervades—the majority party must "rely on extraordinary consultation, pressures, and compromises within its own ranks, as well as on a creative use of the rules, to eke out a victory on contentious legislation" (p. 57).

In short, *Changing Cultures in Congress* provides a rich collection of detailed anecdotes that chronicle both parties' attempts to use congressional procedure as a means to enact their preferred policies. As Wolfensberger notes throughout, both parties lament such strong-handed, exclusionary

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